

FOOD INTAKE & FREQUENCY

There are seven groups in the *Daily Food Guide for Women*. Women need to choose a certain amount from each of the different food groups every day.

Complete a nutrition assessment on every woman at least once each trimester, including a Perinatal Food Frequency Questionnaire. The food frequency questionnaire will help you

- assess her nutritional status
- compare what and how much of each food she eats to the *Daily Food Guide*
- help her find foods she enjoys to improve her intake of the food groups she is missing or doesn't eat enough of
- learn about her food habits, culture, family and lifestyle

HOW TO DO A PERINATAL FOOD FREQUENCY QUESTIONNAIRE (PFFQ)

The Perinatal Food Frequency Questionnaire (PFFQ) uses the main food groups of the *Daily food Guide for Women*. Foods are grouped according to similar nutrients and one food can be exchanged for another within a group. Eating the recommended number of servings in groups 1-6 assures a minimum average intake of protein, vitamins and minerals of at least 90% of the RDA for pregnant and breastfeeding women. Eating the noted recommended servings in the "Other Foods" group assures an intake of unsaturated fats and Vitamin E.

Doing a Perinatal Foods Frequency Questionnaire takes practice. As you learn the steps and do several recalls you will become more comfortable and will obtain more accurate results. Follow the steps below:

1. Explain what you are going to do.

I am going to read off a list of foods. For each food tell me the number of times you eat that food every day. If you do not eat that food daily, tell me how many times you eat that food each week.

2. Fill out the PFFQ.

As you read off the foods, write in the client's answer. If she eats the food every day, write down her answer in the **Daily** column. If she does not eat every day, write down her answer in the **Weekly** column. If she eats the food less than one time per week, do not write down anything.

3. Score the PFFQ

After reading off and filling out the answers for all the food groups go back and add up the totals for groups 1-6. For each group complete each of the following steps:

- a. Add up all the numbers in the **Daily** column and write that number on the **Subtotals** line, to the left of “x7=”. Multiply this number by 7 and write in the total to the right of the “x7=”.
- b. Add up all the numbers in the **Weekly** column and write down that number on the **Subtotals** line.
- c. Add the subtotals from the **Daily** column and **Weekly** column. Write the total on the last line next to **Total Points**.

4. Advise client on changes she should make to her diet.

Review each food group and provide suggestions to help client meet her needs. Use the following steps and information to help evaluate her needs:

- a. Compare the **Total Points** of each group with the **Recommended Points** which is found in parentheses in the lower left corner of each box.
- b. If the **Recommended Points** is greater than the **Total Points** then the client is not meeting her minimum needs for that group. To advise her on how many servings to add to her daily diet **subtract** the **Recommended Points** from the **Total Points** and divide the total by 7. This number is the number of servings from that group the client needs to add to her diet every day.

* The diet is low in total protein only if the combined points of groups 1 and 2 are less than 35.

* A star (*) next to a food indicates that is high in folate. Diet may be low in folate if the total for all starred foods is less than 7.

* A Δ next to a food indicates that it is high in unsaturated fats. Diet may be low in unsaturated fats if the total intake is less than 3.

- c. If the **Total Points** is greater than the **Recommended Points** you will need to evaluate whether a decrease in servings is necessary. (Remember that the **Recommended Points** is the minimum number suggested: a greater intake may be encouraged.) Use the following guidelines to help determine how to advise the client:

Groups 1 & 2: Encourage client to eat the lower fat sources from these groups (chicken, fish and beans from group 1; lowfat/nonfat dairy from group 2). Determine whether a high intake of foods from these groups interferes with an adequate intake from other groups. If intake from these groups is very high, suggest replacing some servings from these groups with servings from the other groups that are deficient.

Group 3: Encourage client to eat whole grain sources of these foods. Remind client to limit higher fat additions to these foods, like butter, margarine, or cream

saucers. Determine whether a high intake of foods from this group interferes with an adequate intake from other groups. If intake from this group is very high, suggest replacing some servings from this group with servings from the other groups that are deficient.

Groups 4, 5 & 6: A high intake from these groups should be encouraged. Remind client to eat a variety of foods from each group. Be sure fruit intake includes both juices and whole fruits. Remind client to limit intake of fried vegetables and limit higher fat additions to vegetables, like butter, cheese or cream sauces.

“Other Foods” Group: This group is not scored, but is evaluated to capture the intake of unsaturated fats. In general, more than 3 servings per day of foods that are high in fat or sugar may lead to excess weight or displacement of more nutrient dense foods. It is recommended that the fat intake be limited to the items indicated with the Δ , which are high in unsaturated fat. Encourage client to eat these foods in moderation. Determine whether a high intake of foods from this group interferes with an adequate intake from other groups. If intake from this group is very high, suggest replacing some servings from this group with servings from the other groups that are deficient. Check the client’s weight. If she is overweight or if she is gaining too much weight, advise her to limit these foods. If she is underweight or if she is gaining too little weight, advise her to eat adequate amounts from all the food groups, then add these extra foods.